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# The Gendered Everyday Political Economy of Kampung Eviction and Resettlement in Jakarta

*Final Project Report*



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## Project Partners and Report Authors

This report is the result of a collaborative partnership between the University of Warwick's Department of Politics and International Studies and Universitas Indonesia's Centre for Elections and Political Party (CEPP). The research was funded by the British Council's Newton Fund under an Institutional Links Grant (project reference 217195589). The project had two complementary streams (a) to conduct research into the gender impact of urban resettlement schemes for the poor in Jakarta and to develop policy recommendations that sought to address issues arising from the research; and (b) to develop an academic partnership that would better develop links between UK and Indonesian academic institutions. This report focuses on the research into urban resettlement. More detail concerning the academic capacity building aspects of our project can be found at our project website <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/research/researchcentres/ipe/jakarta> (see also Elias et al. 2018a).

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Kampung Aquarium. Stalls selling food and drinks re-established by residents occupying the site.

## Project Overview

Jakarta is a city with a huge population – estimated to be home to at least 10 million people, and the wider metropolitan area of Jabodetabek is home to 30 million people, making it the largest city in Southeast Asia. Large areas of the city are classified as *kampungs* – usually consisting of self-built dwellings that house the city's large urban poor population. Often labelled 'slums', the kampung areas of Jakarta frequently include relatively high standard buildings, local shops and services and community facilities. Many kampung residents have lived there for generations, have paid land and property taxes and held documentation relating to their status as Jakarta citizens. Much of the land in Jakarta is however, the subject of land disputes and the urban poor residing in kampungs are extremely vulnerable to eviction as land is cleared to make way for new urban developments (Kusno, 2018, p.76). Evictions are an enduring feature of life for the urban poor of Jakarta. This project was undertaken between 2016 and 2018 with most of the fieldwork taking place in 2016/17 a period in which considerable eviction activity was taking place or had just taken place. The most recent evictions regime was enacted in Jakarta under the governorship of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) from November 2014 to early 2017. This period saw an intensification in both the numbers evicted and the injustice in the mode of effecting the evictions themselves. State narratives in Indonesia present kampung evictions as 'relocations' from 'uninhabitable slums' to 'modern apartments' which are seen as not only benefitting the city as a whole by reducing flooding and providing green spaces but also the kampung communities themselves. Critics have contested such a view – drawing attention to how the processes of eviction involves violent dispossession and impoverishment, alongside the relative lack of provision of public housing for the dispossessed (Tunas and Peresthu, 2010; van Voorst and Padawangi, 2015; van Voorst, 2016).

Our project built upon many of these existing studies, but differed from them in important ways because we sought to draw attention to the centrality of women's labour to the economic and



political life of the kampung and the gendered impacts of eviction as well as resettlement into public housing on Jakartan women. Given the high numbers of female-headed households within Jakarta's kampungs, resettlement involves important gender equality and empowerment issues. Informal kampung economies in which women play prominent roles have facilitated community solidarities and the new housing developments rarely enable women to combine work in the informal economy and their household responsibilities, which can undermine community bonds. In this project, we sought to speak to women impacted by eviction and resettlement. We spoke to women living under the threat of eviction, those who had been evicted but were occupying their former kampung areas, those who were rehoused in public housing blocks known as *rusanawa*, and those living in alternative self-organised housing cooperatives. Women have experienced eviction and resettlement in very different ways – but all respondents pointed to the many negative economic and social impacts of eviction. In this report, we present these women's stories, alongside photos that were taken as part of the research process. These stories all point to one key finding: that there has been a failure to think through how resettlement schemes have particular consequences for women's livelihoods and security. In the final section of the report we have developed a series of recommendations that emerge from this research.

The focus on women's experiences of kampung living and rehousing projects in the research sites centred on issues such as the need for safe urban spaces, and women's involvement in informal economic activity – including how women combine child care and employment. Thus, the project brings important gender concerns to bear on current global agendas such as UN-Habitat's Safer Cities Programme, and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially in relation to SDG5 (gender equality and women's empowerment) and SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities).

During the period of this project we saw the evictions processes stepped up and then rolled back as the issue became entwined with local electoral politics (specifically in relation to the Jakarta gubernatorial elections). These issues were not the specific focus of this research. Nonetheless, the events of 2017 did form the backdrop to this research project and informed some of the activist strategies that those resisting the eviction regime came to engage in.

This report presents its findings in **five parts**:

The **first** part provides an overview of the global policy context in relation to how gender issues have been brought into discussions of urban policy – especially in relation to housing.

The **second** part provides an overview of the academic and policy analyses of gender and urban housing, looking specifically at the issue of eviction. This is a literature that informed our research work in Jakarta and raises important issues in terms of how and why a gender perspective matters in thinking about urban transformations that impact the city's poorest.

The **third** part of the report presents some of the fieldwork conducted in Jakarta – looking at the stories and experiences of women before and after eviction across five different research sites.

The **fourth** and **fifth** parts of the report highlight our project findings and recommendations.

## Cities, Women and Global Development

Whilst our research looked specifically at the very local and everyday impacts of the evictions regime, it is notable that our findings also speak to a range of global policy concerns – specifically pertaining to gender and development – especially in relation to violence against women and girls (VAWG), urbanisation and the livelihoods of the urban poor.

In 2015, the UN launched its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which consists of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 5 is specifically aimed at tackling gender inequality and enhancing female empowerment whilst Goal 11 seeks to make cities 'inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable'. It includes multi-dimensional targets to ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrades to informal settlements. Goal 11 also includes commitments to the provision of safe and accessible public transport systems (with women identified as a group who will benefit from safer public transport services).

In October 2016, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) held in Quito, Ecuador discussed the implementation of the UN SDGs and launched the New Urban Agenda which specifically mentions the need for city authorities to take into account the needs of women. Such initiatives build on UN-Habitat's existing work in this area – specifically their 2014 'Gender Equality Action Plan' which aimed to pro-actively support governments and local authorities 'to respond positively to the opportunities and challenges of urbanization by providing normative or policy advice and technical assistance on transforming cities and other human settlements into inclusive centres of vibrant economic growth, social progress, environmental safety and human security, in the full understanding that this can only be achieved where there is full gender equality and women and youth are empowered' (UN-Habitat, 2014, p.6).

Alongside this initiative, UN-Habitat also focuses on urban gender issues via its 'Safer Cities' initiative aimed at tackling violence and crime in urban environments. Originally launched in Africa in 1996, the programme has expanded to 77 cities in 24 countries worldwide and is particularly aimed at improving the safety of urban women through a multi-dimensional approach that includes crime prevention, enhancing women's security of tenure and rights and better urban planning. Similarly, UN Women has launched initiatives such as the 'Safer Cities and Safe Public Places' programme and similar initiatives have also been funded through the UN and EU's Spotlight initiatives aimed at combatting VAWG.



Kampung Aquarium. Shelters built on the eviction site.

## Urban Poor Women and Eviction: Insights from existing research

Poor women in the Global South are increasingly living in urban informal settlements<sup>i</sup> often on land subject to potential expropriation, exposing them to the threat of eviction. Not only do they face financial deprivation, but their unequal position in society as a result of gender asymmetries, exposes them to imbalances in roles and responsibilities within the household and labour market, inhibits their access to services and facilities, increases the burden on their time and impacts negatively on their rights, well-being and safety. Before turning to discuss the specifics of our project research in Jakarta – it is useful to consider the issue of the gendered impacts of eviction<sup>ii</sup> on resettlement in Jakarta in relation to wider research. Such an examination reveals the extent to which the issues faced by women in Jakarta are part of a global problem in which urban planning decisions are shown to fail specific groups in society – especially urban poor women. This brief review of existing literature reveals how the dispossession of women from their land and housing through eviction has significant impacts. The ramifications are numerous and multi-dimensional and extend beyond the material loss of the domestic home to threats to women's economic, personal, cultural and social security. The deeply gendered impacts of eviction and resettlement mean that it is often women who are the forefront of innovative grassroots resistance struggles to eviction throughout the Global South.

Despite global initiatives to improve livelihoods and living conditions, such as the SDGs, it is estimated that approximately a billion people live in slums or other forms of informal settlements, with numbers increasing (Davis, 2006; Beall and Fox, 2009). Those living in informal settlements often face significant risks that increase the vulnerability of the urban poor – in Jakarta's kampungs for example, these include the risk of flood and fire alongside the risk of dispossession due to eviction. Those living in informal settlements and/or slums around the world often experience high levels of precarity – which stem from (a) wider structures of poverty and vulnerability that limit the ability of the poor to benefit in meaningful ways from expanding urban economies, and (b) competition for land and policies to redevelop and regenerate cities which serves to make life in slums particularly precarious as land is targeted for expropriation. Moreover, resettlement programmes targeting urban poor neighbourhoods do not necessarily serve to address these precarities and vulnerabilities since relocation (often to the city's boundaries) reduces people's income earning opportunities and often creates new financial burdens such as paying rent or higher transportation costs. Furthermore, the majority of those living in extreme poverty are women (Kunieda and Gauthier, 2007 p.4). Evictions and resettlements invariably have deeply gendered consequences.

A gender perspective, focusing on the socially and culturally constructed roles assigned to men and women in society, highlights the enduring inequalities, and discriminatory practices that contribute to the subordination of women from low income groups (Moser, 1993). Whilst urbanization offers opportunities for women to increase their participation in paid employment, improves access to services and infrastructure, tends to encourage lower fertility rates and helps to break-down some of the barriers to gender inequality, in their daily lives urban women face significant levels of disadvantage relative to men (Tacoli and Satterthwaite, 2013, p.3). Women's experiences of urban life vary considerably depending on factors such as class, income, age, education level and marital status (Radoki, 1991, p.549; Tacoli, 2013, p.2), poor urban women face multi-dimensional disadvantages based upon their gender that exacerbate their insecurity and vulnerability. This is an especially significant issue given the high incidence of women-headed households amongst the poorest residents of slums and informal settlements in the Global South (UN-Habitat, 2012, p.9).

Urban poor women in the Global South, who, by definition lack financial resources, often face gender asymmetries in the roles and responsibilities that they undertake both in the home and in the labour market. The persistence of gendered divisions of labour inside and outside of the household mean that women are responsible for unpaid domestic reproductive tasks such as water-collection, waste disposal, cooking, cleaning and care of children, sick and the elderly (Agarwal, 1997, p.3). For women, this creates a double-burden or as Chant suggests, the 'feminisation of responsibility and/or obligation' (Chant, 2014). Urban residents are generally more dependent on monetary income in a cash economy. In addition to reproductive tasks, women may need to earn money through participation in the labour market often in informal, low-paid, unskilled work frequently



undertaken in the home (Chant 2004, p.224). As a result, poor urban women are often time-poor as well as financially deficient. For women living in informal settlements, eviction on the one hand, has the material impact of dispossession of property and home, which Porteous and Smith refer to as 'domicide' (2001). However, as poor urban women often undertake remunerative enterprises in the home, eviction can lead to disruption of economic activity and livelihood (Tilley, Elias and Rethel, 2017, p.5) and less access to infrastructure and (affordable) services, such as water, sanitation and child-care (UN Habitat, 2011, p.x).

Personal safety concerns and violence against poor women in urban environments relate to the particular vulnerabilities that stem from women's position within households – and the issue of gender based violence including domestic violence has been highlighted (Chant and McIlwane, 2016). Cities are not inherently the cause of violence against women but are often perceived to exacerbate vulnerabilities for example, outside of the home, violence against women has been linked to issues such as a lack of sanitary facilities and the existence of unlit streets and walkways (McIlwane, 2013, p. 77, see also Datta 2016). However, this is not to suggest that informal settlements are *necessarily* unsafe spaces for women. Rather, as our research reveals (see below) it is frequently after evictions take place that women are most at risk of these issues. But our research certainly does indicate that women faced with eviction are particularly vulnerable to, often state-supported, violence, intimidation and harassment as 'women are... more likely to be the first targets of police violence during an eviction drive' (UN-Habitat, 2011, p.69), particularly as evictions are often timed to be executed without notice when men are absent at work (Otiso, 2002, p.261).

Eviction or the threat thereof, can have negative impacts on the health of poor urban women. In their study of the mental health impacts of forced eviction on women in Cambodia, Richardson et al. (2016) demonstrated that women suffer considerable anxiety about the future. These included anxieties about the economic threats to livelihoods centred around the informal economy. Moreover, evicted women face social isolation and loss of supportive community networks (see Collyer et al., 2017). This social isolation is frequently compounded by inadequate public transportation systems (Moser 1993, p. 53; UN-Habitat 2011, p. 69).

Rather than impassivity in the face of eviction, it is often urban poor women who take responsibility for resistance and community mobilization (Moser, 1993, p.35). Despite threats of harassment, intimidation and imprisonment, studies attest to the bottom-up agency and activism that women have engaged in to defend their homes and neighbourhoods against eviction, for example, in Cambodia (Brickell, 2014), Ghana (Morrison in Brickell, Arrigoitia and Vasudevan(eds), 2017); Mumbai (Casolo and Doshi, 2013; Patel et al., 2002); and Delhi (Bhan, 2009). Perhaps most importantly, academic studies have also indicated that active and engaged grassroots mobilizations such as these can play a significant role in mitigating against the worst impacts of resettlement and, in certain circumstances, grassroots activism has fed into genuinely participatory forms of urban planning in which urban poor residents, and women in particular, have been able to shape the design and implementation of resettlement (Patel et al., 2002).



The space left by demolished homes along the Ciliwung riverbank in the Bukit Duri neighbourhood.

## Eviction and Relocation in Jakarta: Stories and Images

This section of the project report provides an overview of the research conducted in Jakarta. These findings are also discussed in greater depth in a range of publications (some of which are forthcoming) (Tilley, 2016; Tilley et al., 2017; Elias et al., 2018b; Rethel, 2018; Rethel et al., forth.; Mar'iyah, 2018). Interviews were conducted by project researcher Dr Lisa Tilley with the assistance of a translator. We worked closely with urban poor activist networks in order to gain access and secure the trust of our interviewees. Our prior working relationships with urban poor networks, such as Ciliwung Merdeka, meant that we were able to connect with kampung residents through their trusted advocates. We do not use the names of the respondents and have excluded some discussions in order to ensure anonymity. In total we interviewed twenty women across the field sites - we only reproduce some of these stories in this report.

In what follows we provide a short overview of the project research sites and then present some of the women's stories that we collected. We draw upon these stories (and others collected during the project fieldwork) in order to develop practical policy-steps that could be incorporated into urban planning policy-making more broadly. The original plan for the research was to conduct the field work within two specific sites. However, given the rapidly evolving and changing nature of the evictions regime – we broadened our focus to five research sites. Working with urban poor activist groups exposed us to some of the unexpected outcomes of the evictions regime – specifically the development of alternative co-operative housing arrangements as well as the occupation of eviction sites by those seeking to defy the evictions regime and to gain some compensation for their losses. Working across the five different sites (one a site of complete eviction in which residents were occupying the site, one a site of partial eviction, two public housing complexes and one alternative housing co-operative) enabled us to capture the diversity of women's experiences of eviction and expropriation.





A mother keen to stay close to her daughter's school runs a small warung selling meals and snacks inside the rebuilt family shelter in Kampung Akuarium.

#### Site One: Bukit Duri

*Bukit Duri* is a kampung bordering the city's Ciliwung river. Ciliwung communities nearby have already seen significant areas evicted and Bukit Duri residents have been involved in ongoing efforts to block the evictions through the courts via a class action law suit. The interviews that we undertook at this site were with people who had been evicted and their stories attest to the significant hardships imposed by eviction. We were able to interview some who had been evicted from the site and some who were able to remain. All interviews attested to the rich social infrastructure of kampung life prior to eviction – tight knit friendship and support groups, savings clubs, *arisan* lottery groups and other collective savings schemes, co-operative business groupings, and high levels of trust between neighbours. The interviewees also indicated the extent to which Bukit Duri was an established neighbourhood in which residents owned their properties, many of which had been there for over sixty years. All of the respondents interviewed who had been evicted were offered re-housing in Rawa Bebek. This is a low-rent public housing site located around 14 kilometres away from Bukit Duri and therefore a considerable distance from places of work and children's schools. Some of the women interviewed had worked in jobs that were conveniently located near to Bukit Duri and others had run small businesses from their homes that could be easily combined with childcare responsibilities.

*Siti* had lived in Bukit Duri her whole life. She lived in her grandmother's house which had been bought in the 1950s. Her mother had been born in the house and four generations had lived there. Kampung life prior to the evictions revolved around numerous routine activities and gatherings – including some in which women played a prominent role such as *arisan*. There were three families residing there at the time of the eviction. They received three warning letters about the eviction with the notices stating that eviction was necessitated for the 'public interest'. She was offered rental accommodation in the Rawa Bebek public housing site. But she estimates that this is over 14 kilometres away from her old house, a one hour journey by the TransJakarta bus way. She refused

the offer mainly because of the distance, but also because the public housing accommodation is rented not owned and because she would also have to pay business rent. She ran a small snack shop from her home in Bukit Duri selling sticky rice – this would not be permitted in public housing and she would have had to rent a plot in order to sell her products and would find it difficult to combine work away from her home work with her childcare responsibilities. In Bukit Duri, seven people lived in her house and allocations of public housing generally only offer people one apartment for one single evicted plot. So rehousing in Rawa Bebek would have been very crowded. The Rawa Bebek site was far from the workplaces of other household members and her children would have to move school (or would have to leave home at 5am in order to get there on time). The worst thing for Siti is the breakdown of community which she suggested used to be 'like a family' and emphasised the strong bonds and sense of safety that existed within the community. Evictions and resettlement invariably created divisions within the community. Siti joined a class action law suit in order to seek some compensation for her losses.

*Ida* still lives in Bukit Duri. Her house escaped demolition because it was built on railway company land but the row of houses opposite had been destroyed. The house originally belonged to her father in law who is now deceased, but the property passed to her husband. The house was marked for demolition, but she reported this to the railway company and the company had the plans halted. Nonetheless, she has been impacted by the evictions. Her mother's house was being demolished and her mother moved to public housing in Rawa Bebek. Her friendship group all moved there too. Now she rarely sees her mother who is around 65 years old, because of difficulties with public transport. Since the row of houses opposite her were demolished, she feels unsafe. The houses opposite backed onto the river and faced her house, so the neighbours looked out for each other. Now she has the road and then the river beyond in front of her door and she feels exposed. She now takes her motorbike into the house at night to keep it safe, whereas she used to leave it outside before the houses opposite were evicted.



The back of Kampung Luar Batang viewed from Pasar Ikan across the water.



**Site Two: Kampung Akuarium**

*Kampung Akuarium* located in the Pasar Ikan area is the site of some of the most recent evictions in Jakarta. This area is located in a coastal location in North Jakarta and borders the preserved former warehouses of the Dutch East India Company (now a museum). Over 500 families were evicted from this site and it remains a site of protest – as residents have sought to occupy the sites of their former homes, establishing temporary shelters, and remaking community facilities (mosques, food stalls (*warungs*) etc.) on the ruins. At the time of our visits, some temporary housing still remained intact at Kampung Akuarium – although much of this was at clear risk of eviction. People staying on the site were doing so for a mix of reasons – people spoke of the need to live within a reasonable distance to work and/or children's schools, others were seeking compensation from the government and saw occupation as a mechanism to secure this. For many of the women interviewed, an adequate compensation deal was seen as opening up the possibility of accessing housing solutions that would not involve moving into public housing blocks. Many people evicted from the site went into public housing. Communities were broken up and offers of housing were often far away in sites such as Rawa Bebek. Many people attempted to stay closer to their former homes by renting property nearby – however, following the eviction, rents had risen sharply creating further economic strain for households.

**Ani** was living in a small rebuilt shelter whilst operating a small *warung* selling *tempat*. She had been evicted from Kampung Akuarium and was now occupying the exact plot of her former home. Her old house had two floors and was a permanent structure – brick-built with a wooden top floor. Seven people had lived in the house prior to the eviction. When they first moved to Jakarta, Ani and her husband had first rented a house in the city, then bought land (for 3 million rupiah) on which they built their own house and for which they paid tax every year to the government.

She had previously sold coffee, juice and iced drinks from her home, but now has few customers since the evictions took place. Before the eviction, she was given three warning letters in the space



Residents in Rawa Bebek are provided with small lockable cages in which they can dry clothes, prepare food and store belongings



A home in Bukit Duri that was marked with red paint for demolition, but survived the eviction.

of just one week. Ani was offered accommodation a significant distance away from Kampung Akuarium, but her daughter attends a local school and she wanted to stay close to her daughter's school and her husband's work. When the evictions took place her husband, who works in the maritime industries, was away at sea.

As well as income generating opportunities, the kampung had also provided her with opportunities for saving clubs and *arisan* involvement, as well some assistance with childcare – in the form of PAUD neighbourhood-based childcare. Moreover, the evictions have meant that her friends and family have all been separated, again diminishing her social support network.

**Rini** was also staying on the Kampung Akuarium site. Three generations had lived in her former house – two parents, four children and three grandchildren. She had lived in Kampung Akuarium since the 1980s – 'this was not a slum', she told us. Kampung life was not only one in which a wide variety of economic activities proliferated, but was also one in which the community provided for its own security – establishing their own security officer. Now she only lives with her husband, her children are scattered across various places in rented houses. The men in the family, including her husband, work on the boats and this was the main problem with the public housing on offer which was located far from their places of work. She told us that she is staying put because she wants compensation. A community leader organised people to go to the trial and a local legal aid NGO, LBH, was at that time helping to facilitate the legal process. Again, the concern was raised that moving into public housing means changing address which she believes then means she has no possibility of joining the legal action because she would no longer be registered with the community.

Like many women in the Kampung she had operated a small shop – and she continues to do so. Her shop income was previously 100,000 rupiah per day, now she earns half that. Her husband has also seen a significant reduction in his earnings – he used to earn money transporting workers to the port, but now few people leave from the kampung Akuarium area.



**Site Three: Rawa Bebek Public Housing**

*Rawa Bebek* is the site of a new public housing development located in the East of Jakarta. Residents who have been rehoused in accommodation at Rawa Bebek came from a number of different evicted kampungs from across the city. It is a development in which residents are housed in small units of up to three rooms in total (two bedrooms and a living area). The units are arranged vertically with some as high as sixteen storeys. The units are designed to accommodate nuclear families, but often larger extended families were living in single unit spaces.

**Yanti** had moved to Rawa Bebek public housing after being evicted from a kampung in West Jakarta. She had previously lived in a house with three people. The back part of the house had two floors. She had bought the land that she built on, and her house was permanent with ceramic tiles. The ground floor had two rooms and the two rooms on the top floor were rented out to a tenant. They had recently spent 40 million rupiah on renovations to the house. The house is now demolished. She had worked in a traditional bakery making cakes which was also demolished after the kampung eviction. She moved out prior to the eviction, after having received two warning letters. She lost both her bakery job and her rental income after the evictions.

She now runs a small warung in the public housing complex, but informed us that the income generated from this enterprise does not bring in enough money to cover the family's living expenses. Her warung is located within a selling space within the Rawa Bebek complex. Originally the commercial spaces were 50,000 rupiah per month to rent, but the traders collectively refused to pay this because there are so few customers passing through the public housing block. She now does not pay rent on her selling space. She informed us that some women are still working near their old neighbourhood but they leave at 4.30 in the morning to travel there. Her husband works as a security guard over 25 kilometres away but it takes an hour to travel there by scooter (one and a half hours if the traffic is bad). She is relatively active within her new neighbourhood and takes part in organised groups in the public housing complex such as an arisan and reading groups, as well as a women's exercise group that runs in the evening. However, she informed us that she has no legal contract in the current public housing and at the end of November 2016 was still waiting for relocation. Her family were residing in a studio unit (which is supposed to be for single people or couples), a single room with the cooking and clothes drying facilities in a small lockable caged area out in the corridor. This was a temporary measure while she waited for a family apartment with cooking facilities inside to become available.

**Site Four: West Jatinegara Public Housing**

This is a new social housing complex in East Jakarta that has been built to accommodate those relocated during the most recent spate of evictions. Some of those living in West Jatinegara had previously been resident close to the site, but others have been relocated from much further afield. Similar in design to the Rawa Bebek site, the housing blocks are all high rise and units are separated by corridors in which commercial activities are banned. The complex is set back from the road and is policed by security guards - including a guard at the main entrance to the site. The complex includes a commercial floor for stalls selling food, drinks and other provisions and small businesses (e.g. tailoring) and also has some space available for community activities. Many of the women running small businesses on the site prefer to operate away from the selling floor, preferring to be located outside of the complex, or close to the entrance gate, in order to catch passing trade.

**Lina** works selling chicken and fish dishes outside of the housing block close to the street. Her husband passed away four years ago. She lives with her unemployed son and a granddaughter - she is the only income earner in the household. She had been evicted from Kampung Pulo in 2015 where she had a two-storey home with a bathroom, kitchen, electricity and running water. She also had a commercial stall that she operated from a site separate to her home. She has worked for 35 years but these days her income is incredibly irregular.

She now lives on the tenth floor and transports her entire cart and stall items down every day in the lift. She sold much more in Kampung Pulo than she does here. Here in the public housing she has not paid her water bill for seven months. She has had help from BAZIS, the zakat (Islamic alms tax) collecting organisation for Jakarta DKI, for the past seven months. She owes four million rupiah for water bills and rent and received a warning about non-payment of rent. She previously didn't have



The West Jatinegara public housing complex.



to pay bills and is finding it hard to adjust. She says there are many female-headed households in the complex. As with the Rawa Bebek site, there are arisan groups, and there is also a pangajian (Quran reading group) but she doesn't participate in either. She constantly struggles with payments for her accommodation. She says that the only benefit of public housing is having a place to sleep.

**Site Five: Alternative Housing Co-operative**

Members of our research team visited Pawang cooperative housing initiative. Run by a cooperative of around 100 people, the complex also incorporates a tea shop and communal area. Twenty families live here. There are two floors which have been divided with wooden frames and plyboard to make rooms. They have seven toilets. Each family pays 500,000 per month, including a fridge (and 430,000 per month without). The families are looking for land to buy collectively in order to build their own Kampung Susun (vertical kampung) - see below for more details. The rehousing schemes have consistently moved households in a random order so that residents in public housing do not know their neighbours - interviews with people at the Pawang cooperative revealed that this was one of the major reasons why people chose not to relocate.

**Eva** had lived in the neighbourhood of Bukit Duri since the 1970s. She has memories of playing on the train tracks in the 1980s. She told us that back then, the river water used to be clean enough for washing clothes and vegetables.

The eviction process happened extremely quickly. The first warning of eviction came at eight o'clock in the evening, and they refused to take the letter. The second came 10 days later and was delivered in the morning. The third warning letter was glued to their wall and they were given one week to



Temporary homes being rebuilt by evicted residents on the rubble of Kampung Aquarium

move. There was no violence or struggle on the eviction day at Bukit Duri, because the community had decided to pursue acceptance and a peaceful movement for justice. Women handed over flowers as a symbol of their peaceful movement.

In Bukit Duri she had been involved in a cooperative sewing group producing garments for sale with twenty other women. This is no longer in operation. They still have an arisan group and a pengajian group in operation in continuation from the kampung. They also have a mother and child healthcare programme which monitors health, weight and provides immunisation. The cooperative housing is organised on a one-year contract. They were hoping their legal case for compensation would be successful and that the resulting compensation could be used collectively to build a kampung susun.

## Summary Discussion of Project Key Findings

For urban poor residents kampungs provide more than simply shelter but also vital economic resources – employment and other income generating activities that are often centred on the home, social networks that enabled kampung residents to combine paid forms of work with unpaid work such as child care and care of older persons, and practical community-based economic initiatives such as savings and social insurance schemes. While often seen by outsiders to be sites of criminality and insecurity, kampung life, for the woman we spoke to, was characterised by high levels of social trust – tight-knit informal bonds that serve to provide community, security, well-being and economic opportunities. This is not to idealise kampung life. Many kampung districts are sites of significant flood and fire risk. Residents wanted upgrading and better security of tenure – something that they initially appeared to be getting under the governorship of Joko Widodo (the current Indonesian president who was previously Jakarta governor).

Public Housing whilst offering the promise of safe, clean modern living also involves significant social, economic and psychological costs. Respondents living in public housing discussed the decline in their ability to generate income in the informal economy. Often running stalls, their income in busy centrally located kampung areas had been higher. Some women who had been living in kampungs for many years also rented out rooms in order to generate extra income – and this was something that was especially important for older women who struggled to find ways to earn income into old age. Paying rent also placed households in very vulnerable situations – because they often lacked the means to pay rent due to their reduced financial circumstances. Indeed, we were made aware that in West Jatinegara charities and similar organisations had stepped in to cover the rent of tenants but this is not formalized and takes place largely on an ad hoc basis making the support neither consistent nor unlimited. Life in the rusanawa (public housing complex) is also more closely controlled. Tenants can face fines and even eviction for not following rules and regulations and are strictly prohibited from sub-letting their accommodation. The rusanawa do frequently have CCTV and security guards – but residents didn't feel safer in public housing (indeed, interviews with housing managers suggested that CCTV played more of a role in monitoring resident's behaviour rather than to prevent criminal activities)<sup>iii</sup>.

There have been efforts to replicate some of the communal aspects of kampung life in public housing. There are classes and other activities to attend, clinics and mosques. But rebuilding community life from scratch is incredibly difficult when new neighbours are strangers to one another. Urban poor groups have proposed alternative social housing designs which begin with a consideration of the existing lives of kampung residents. The designs were developed together with participatory input from local residents through discussion groups, as well as the involvement of architects from Universitas Indonesia. The resulting architectural plans centre on the concept of the 'vertical kampung' which attempts to recreate the essential features of horizontally organised space in the kampung, but in a more condensed area and over a greater number of storeys. The prime objective of the vertical kampung idea, as demanded by potential residents, is the incorporation of economic space into social housing. In addition, residents have also articulated demands for places of religious worship and other forms of social space to be integrated into the design (see Tilley, 2017). It is an idea that, whilst in certain respects is unique to Jakarta, has also been used elsewhere. Most notably we should point to the case of participatory planning and design with grassroots groups in Mumbai that has been widely seen as a successful example of best practice (e.g. Patel et al, 2002). However, we found no evidence to suggest that this approach was being put into practice. Certain respondents living in alternative housing co-operatives were keen to explore the possibilities of the vertical kampung idea (especially if they were able to raise funds via compensations claims to do so) but there appears to be no appetite amongst policy elites to embrace such an idea.

During the course of our research there were some significant developments – these included on going cases in the courts pertaining to the legality of evictions and the compensation paid to former kampung residents and also Ahok's loss of the governorship of Jakarta. Whilst some observers saw Ahok's electoral loss and his concurrent trial on charges of blasphemy as indicative of the rise of conservative Islamic politics in Indonesia (Ahok is Christian and of Chinese descent), others have pointed to the role that the evictions regimes played in this context – with urban poor populations who were at risk of eviction or had faced eviction being specifically courted by Ahok's political opposition (Wilson, 2016; Safrin, 2017; Padawangi, 2017). Resistance to eviction was something that

many of our respondents engaged in – but it was also notable that there were also many people that we spoke with who for a combination of reasons (including financial – e.g. those already renting in the kampung, no evidence of property ownership, or simply fear of retribution) moved to public housing, which appears to have further decreased the possibility that these people will have in being able to access any compensation. Communities have been scattered and those seeking out alternatives face equally precarious futures.



## Project Recommendations

With these research findings in mind, we make a number of project recommendations which also informed the development of a women's empowerment toolkit (a practitioner focused tool) which can be found on our project website.

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/research/researchcentres/ipe/jakarta>

These recommendations are as follows:

- **That there is a clear need for a gender perspective to be mainstreamed into urban planning decisions that impact Jakarta's kampungs. Such an approach must recognise that;**
  - a. the specific needs and issues faced by women should be thoroughly incorporated into urban planning and policy making. This is a reflection of the positioning of women within kampung life (for example, their reliance on home based informal income generating activities, responsibility for child and elderly care, specific vulnerabilities to gendered forms of violence amongst other factors);
  - b. female headed households constitute a particularly vulnerable and impoverished group and resettlement should ensure that the livelihoods of these households are not further negatively impacted;
  - c. relocation may entail costs for women such as a deterioration in psychological well-being stemming from social isolation/loss of community ties.
- **That planners and policy-makers need to fully account for the economic importance of kampung life. Including;**
  - a. the significant role that informal economic activities such as operating food stalls play in household livelihood strategies (and how relocation can lead to income drops), as well as the centrality of women's labour to these income generating activities;
  - b. how community based informal activities such as mutual savings clubs enhance household security, but are dependent upon the existence of strong community bonds;
  - c. recognition of women's unpaid work and the extent to which resettlement places additional economic and financial strains on women (e.g. less friendship networks or extended family around to assist with care responsibilities, or how lack of cooking facilities within social housing units which adds to the time involved in preparing meals etc.);
  - d. recognition of how, for some kampung residents, the ownership of property serves to provide economic security into old age and how eviction creates huge economic uncertainty for older women in particular;
  - e. the financial costs and other burdens (e.g. health impacts) associated with commuting to work or school by family members.
- **The development of participatory planning processes that enable the voices of the poor to be heard and to shape the design of planning solutions in ways that meet the needs of male and female kampung residents. This should include;**
  - a. an end to forced evictions, especially those conducted in a violent manner with limited local consultation;
  - b. the formulation of compensation schemes that provide adequate and just compensation for eviction. Such an approach will necessarily involve:
    - i. a comprehensive mapping of kampung districts prior to eviction done in collaboration with urban poor representatives including women's organizations. Such a mapping will not only survey household size and composition, but also the extensive economic activities of kampung dwellers - including unpaid labour done mainly by women.
    - ii. The extensive involvement of community groups in all stages of the planning and implementation process including in generating and developing designs for new housing development and/or kampung upgrading schemes.
    - iii. Recognition that full and adequate compensation for evictees goes beyond the provision of public housing and should also recognise the full and long term costs that eviction and relocation entails.



Interior detail Rawa Bebek public housing.

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<sup>i</sup> Beall and Fox argue that "The term 'slum' is now commonly used to embrace all areas characterised by poor quality dwellings and inadequate infrastructure, whether downtown tenements or irregular peripheral settlements. Slum settlements are defined by lack of secure tenure, poor (or non-existent) basic infrastructure such as water and sewerage, and poor-quality dwellings" (2009, p.27).

<sup>ii</sup> Eviction may take numerous forms. It may be involuntary or forced which is legally defined as 'the permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection' (Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, general comment No. 7 (1997) in Collyer et al (2017, p.51-52) and is recognised by the UN Commission on Human Rights as a gross violation of human rights. Alternatively, eviction may be voluntary, for example, when resettlement is available to evictees, although this may entail coercive pressure.

<sup>iii</sup> As part of this research project we also undertook interviews with officers in charge of management and maintenance of public housing sites. The housing officers themselves tend to be university-educated civil servants, distinguished by the uniforms that they wear as well as their level of formal education. These interviews are discussed in more detail in Tilley et al (2018).



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**Cover image:** Image of Kampung Aquarium with the preserved VOC warehouses in the background. Houses on the left of the image have been bulldozed, a small hand built ferry service replaces a bridge that one connected different sections of the kampung.